

apparatus of Mondat, are dismissed with deservedly scant notice. Among internal remedies phosphorus and strychnia find especial favor with our author, and he describes in some detail the formulæ and the methods of administration.

Cauterization, after the manner recommended by Lallemand, and followed by very many of the surgeons of the present time, the author regards as a "most pernicious practice." "There is nothing that can be done by cauterization that cannot be better and more safely effected by electricity in any of the ways mentioned." "I have cauterized," he continues, "many patients in my time, before I knew better, and I have caused a great deal of suffering thereby, and conferred a very small modicum of good, and I therefore cauterize no longer." We agree fully with the author in this remark, but would add to it an observation which has been brought to our own attention in some of these cases, that the cautery applied to the skin over the lower portion of the spinal cord often affords the best results.

The remaining two chapters of this work are mainly interesting in that they round out to full proportions the complete plan of treatment of the subject which the author had set out to accomplish.

Not the least merit of the work is the fact that Dr. Hammond rides no medical hobby, but squarely lays before the profession the results of much reading and a large experience. We find the book entertaining, practical, and a safe guide to the student in search of aid in treating these often difficult cases. W. J. M.

A Practical Treatise on Impotence, Sterility, and Allied Disorders of the Male Sexual Organs. By SAMUEL W. GROSS, A.M., M.D., Professor of the Principles of Surgery and Clinical Surgery in the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, etc., etc. Second edition, thoroughly revised. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea's Son & Co., 1883.

Almost simultaneously with the appearance of Dr. Hammond's book on Impotence, just noticed, a second edition of Dr. Gross' already classical work upon the same subject was issued by the Philadelphia publishers. It is seldom that two works upon the same subject present greater dissimilarities. So far as their resemblance in general "make-up" and manner of viewing the question of impotence are concerned the two books must have been written at the opposite poles. While Dr. Hammond views the question from a physiological and psychical stand-point, Dr. Gross

views it from a surgical and anatomical. "I long ago," says Dr. Gross, "reached the conclusion that impotence was generally induced by subacute or chronic inflammation and morbid sensibility of the prostatic urethra, which were frequently associated with stricture, and which were usually due to masturbation, gonorrhœa, sexual excesses, and constant excitement of the genital organs without gratification of the passions. In subsequent papers I called attention to the fact, previously noticed by other writers, that inflammation of the prostatic urethra bears the same relation to the spinal reflexes of the male that inflammation of the uterus bears to allied disorders in the female, and that it is a constant source of irritation of the genital nerves which terminate in that locality. An enfeebled state of the lumbar division of the cord and exhaustion of the cells that minister to its reflex functions are thus finally brought about."

We have quoted Dr. Gross thus *in extenso* because the doctrine here put forth is, as it were, the key-note of his entire volume. And it must be admitted that in the theory thus lucidly expounded there is the usual scientific pleasure that is excited by the reduction of scattered facts to a generalization which may be accepted as a law. It is the same theory that has led Sayre to circumcise constricted and adherent prepuces for certain cases of infantile paraplegia—the same on which is based to a large extent the *raison d'être* of the gynecologist who traces to the uterus not all ills that flesh is heir to, since certain ineffaceable conditions of sex here intervene, but certainly all ills that female flesh is heir to. We will not deny that the gynecologist is sometimes right—just often enough to make him frequently wrong; nor that parietic children are sometimes cured by circumcision—just often enough to demonstrate that this is seldom the case; nor that the treatment of the prostatic urethra by cauterization does not sometimes cure impotence—here again just often enough to mislead the practitioner into a too general application of the remedy, but we merely wish to observe, by calling attention to the facts of the case as they must have occurred to every practitioner, that generalizations of this nature, attractive as they are, are often too sweeping and more than can yet be expected of an inexact science like medicine.

Too much praise cannot, however, be extended to Dr. Gross for his attempt to reduce disease to a material and discoverable basis—certainly the statement on page 23, that of 173 cases observed by him who suffered from "atonic impotence, only

twenty-two were free from stricture," goes far to sustain his doctrine.

Dr. Gross is no believer in "psychical impotence"; on the contrary he would, in cases supposed to be of this nature, examine the prostatic urethra for evidences of inflammation dependent upon previous habits of masturbation.

But we do not intend to review this work in an extended manner. It is now in its second edition, and has already received wide and favorable notice. Its dissimilarity from Dr. Hammond's work presents in an interesting light the diversity of views upon the same subject that may arise from different stand-points of observation occupied by two able observers. In a certain sense the two works are supplementary and complementary—the surgical basis of disease of the one might have been illumined by the imagination of the neurologist, while on the other hand the deductions of the neurologist might have been more closely confined to the material basis of the surgeon. Each will find readers, admirers, and followers.

W. J. M.

Insanity Considered in its Medico-Legal Relations. By T. R. BUCKHAM, A.M., M.D. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1883; 8vo, pp. 265.

While there is nothing specially new in this essay of Dr. Buckham's, it consists of a lucid and forcible protest against the present laws and practice bearing upon insanity trials, the absurdities of which, as they are ordinarily conducted, are well and thoroughly exposed.

In the first place, he discusses the several theories of the nature of insanity—the physical media, the metaphysical, the somatic, and the so-called intermediate or mixed,—and gives in his adherence to the first-named, mainly, we think, from the fact that he does not appear to possess enough knowledge on the subject to discuss it in all its bearings. When Dr. Buckham declares, as he does, that the medical superintendents of the insane asylums in the United States know all there is to know of insanity, we may form a tolerably correct idea of the extent of his own acquirements; and when he lauds them for what they have done to advance alienistic science, he shows that he has very little idea of what he is talking about. The reformatory measures which have taken place in lunatic asylums have been forced upon the superintendents against their will. If they had been let alone from without, there would have been very little if any